

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

I. Claim Status & Amendments

Claims 21-23, 26-28, 30 and 34 are pending. Claims 21-23 are withdrawn as non-elected subject matter. Claims 26-28, 30, and 34 have been examined on the merits and stand rejected.

Claims 26-28, 30, and 34 have been amended in a non-narrowing manner to correct formal matters. Support can be found throughout the general disclosure and in the claims as filed. No new matter has been added by the above claim amendments.

Applicants note that the above claim amendments are intended to address matters of form only as they are not intended to affect the scope of the claims. Accordingly, if the next Office Action on the merits includes a new ground of rejection of one or more claims, the Action must be non-final.

II. Objection to the Abstract

The Abstract was objected to for the reasons in item 4 on page 2.

The present amendment overcomes this objection by amending the specification to replace the Abstract of record with the attached revised (clean copy) Abstract. Applicants have also provided a marked-up copy of the Abstract showing the changes.

III. Claim Objections

Claim 26 was objected to for containing informalities for the reasons in item 2 on page 2 of the Official Action.

The present amendment overcomes this objection by amending the claim to correct the noted informalities. Thus, withdrawal of the objection is requested.

IV. Indefiniteness Rejection

Claims 26-28, 30, and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reasons in items 7-21 on pages 3-6 of the Official Action.

It is respectfully submitted that the present amendment overcomes this rejection for reasons which are self-evident. In particular, Applicants have amended the claims in a non-narrowing manner to clarify the invention and provide consistency and antecedent basis throughout.

As to item 8, Applicants have amended claim 26 to remove the objected language from the preamble.

As to item 9, claim 26 is amended to provide proper antecedent basis for the recited terminology.

As to items 10, 12, and 13, Applicants have amended claim 26 so that the recited features in the body of the claim are consistent with the preamble.

As to item 11, claim 26 is amended to clarify the invention by reciting "optionally repeating steps i) - iv)" for

further functional elements other than the first and second functional elements and binding elements other than the first and second binding elements."

As to item 14, claim 26 is amended to reflect that said linker molecule connecting said first and second target molecules or areas of step v) is reacted with the molecular combination of any one of steps i) - iv).

As to items 15 and 16, claim 26 is amended to clarify the invention and provide proper antecedent basis for the recited terminology.

As to item 17, claim 30 is amended to "fraction thereof" to thereby overcome the concern raised in the Official Action.

As to items 18-21, Applicants have amended claim 34 to clarify the invention and provide proper antecedent basis for the recited terminology.

In view of the above, it is believed that the claims are thus clear, definite and have full antecedent basis. The rejection is believed to be overcome, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

Having addressed all of the issues in the Official Action, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance and early notice to that effect is hereby requested. If

the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON

/Jay F. Williams/

Jay F. Williams, Reg. No. 48,036
209 Madison Street, Suite 500
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone (703) 521-2297
Telefax (703) 685-0573
(703) 979-4709

JFW/ml

APPENDIX:

The Appendix includes the following item(s):

- a new or amended Abstract of the Disclosure (clean version)